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NDASFAA Update



WOW! The scenic view of Breckenridge Colorado was beautiful, but the five days that I spent in the mountains proved without a doubt that I am truly a flatlander. It was a great conference in spite of the lack of oxygen!

North Dakota is well represented on the 2008 RNASFAA Board with Laurie Weber as secretary and Donna Seaboy as the NDASFAA President. Don Flaherty is the RNASFAA Finance and Audit committee chair and Katie Nettell is a member of the Leadership Pipeline committee.

Obviously the topic of ethics, lenders, and the entire loan program was high on the list of discussions. Many of these discussions left us wondering why we should continue in this line of work, but there were many "cheerleaders" in the crowd that would remind us that we are here for the students and they need us to advocate for them. The new federal programs aim to be beneficial to many students, but the processing usually becomes the issue. That is why we need to communicate with our legislators. We need to inform them of how their decisions really affect the student population and how we do business.

This was Dr. Dallas Martin's final RNASFAA Conference as the President of NASFAA. He and Brett Lief entertained us as well as informed the attendees of the atmosphere in Washington, D.C. Each of the RNASFAA states presented Dr. Martin with a retirement gift. NDASFAA gave him a book of Chuck Haney photographs of North Dakota, a letter from Governor Hoeven (see Page 2), and a few buffalo chips on the side.

The training continues for NDASFAA as 2007 Decentralized Training will be held in Fargo at Rasmussen College on November 1-2, 2007. The topic is "Counseling Students and Families: Tackling Financial Issues".

Enjoy the last days of fall, the beginning of the holiday season and of course a few snowflakes. Stay safe!

~ Shirley Hanson, NDASFAA President

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— State of —
North Dakota

Office of the Governor

John Hoeven
Governor

October 19, 2007

Dr. Dallas Martin
President
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
Washington, D.C.

Dear Dr. Martin:

As Governor of the great state of North Dakota and on behalf of your work with the North Dakota Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, I would like to congratulate you on your upcoming retirement as president of the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. I applaud you for your dedication and leadership over the past 32 years in helping students achieve their higher education goals.

You and your organization have worked hard to serve and represent more than 10,000 financial aid professionals at nearly 3,000 colleges, universities and career schools across the country, including those from North Dakota. We have appreciated your assistance as the primary liaison between NASFAA's membership and the U.S. Congress, the Executive Branch and the U.S. Department of Education, as well as other governmental agencies. Because of your efforts, federal legislation and regulations have been enacted to improve access to higher education funding resources for students across North Dakota and the nation.

Congratulations, again, on your retirement and thank you for the great work you have done on behalf of North Dakota's financial aid professionals and higher education students.

Best wishes for continued success in your retirement!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Hoeven". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and last name "Hoeven" clearly distinguishable.

John Hoeven
Governor

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2007 NDASFAA High School Counselor Workshops

NDASFAA has scheduled High School Counselor Workshops at six different sites across the state. Each workshop will cover a variety of topics which may include: financial aid information, FAFSA update, College Goal Sunday, Internet resources, College Cost Reduction and Access Act, loan programs, and more (topics may vary per workshop).

There is a \$5 fee for the sessions which is to be paid at the site. Please make checks payable to NDASFAA. A continental breakfast will be served. The site coordinators will provide you with parking information and permits if needed. If you have questions, please contact the site coordinator listed below for specific workshop information. The registration deadline is Friday, November 2, 2007.

Tuesday, November 13

Lake Region State College — Devils Lake

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. — Workshop from 9 a.m. - Noon

Chautauqua Gallery — Main Building of LRSC Campus

Site Coordinator: Katie Nettell — 701-662-1517 or katie.nettell@lrsc.nodak.edu

Wednesday, November 14

University of North Dakota — Grand Forks

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. — Workshop from 9 a.m. - noon

Memorial Union — South Ballroom (2nd Floor)

Site Coordinator: Cathy Krostue — 701-777-3121 or cathykrostue@mail.und.nodak.edu

Wednesday, November 14

Minot State University — Minot

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. — Workshop from 9 a.m. - Noon

Student Union Conference Center — Audubon Room

Site Coordinator: Merri Jo Connoles — 1-800-777-0750 ext. 4152 or merrijo.connoles@minotstateu.edu

Thursday, November 15

North Dakota State University — Fargo

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. — Workshop from 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Memorial Union — Arikara Room

Site Coordinator: Brigit Sprenger — 701-231-8397 or brigit.sprenger@ndsu.edu

Thursday, November 15

Bismarck State College — Bismarck

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. — Workshop from 9 a.m. - Noon

Student Union — Prairie Room

Site Coordinator: Jeff Jacobs — 701-224-5441 or jeffrey.jacobs@bsc.nodak.edu

Wednesday, November 28

Dickinson State University — Dickinson

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. — Workshop from 9 a.m. - Noon (MT)

North Campus — Strom Center (Room 101)

Site Coordinator: Sandy Klein — 1-800-279-4295 ext. 2566 or sandy.klein@dsu.nodak.edu

Financial Barriers are Obstacles to College for Both Old and Young

Washington, D.C. (October 2007) – Nearly 20 percent of all Americans are between the ages of 55 and 79, and most have no plans of going quietly into their retirement years. According to *Framing New Terrain: Older Adults & Higher Education*, a new report from the American Council on Education (ACE), the average retirement age and life expectancy in 1950 was 68, meaning most people worked their entire lives.

Today, the average retirement age is down to 62 and the average life expectancy has increased to 78. Older Americans have more time on their hands during retirement than ever before. Some will go back to college for personal enrichment, but many others need higher education to help them retool their skills for second careers or jobs to supplement their retirement income. For those students, finances can be a major barrier to college.

In a recent survey conducted by Merrill Lynch, 71 percent of Americans between the ages of 25 and 70 said they hope to continue working past their expected retirement age, but not necessarily in the same job. The ACE report recognizes that most retirees are entering a “third age of life” filled with new business ventures and new full-time and part-time careers that call for additional training.

Colleges and universities will have a unique set of students in future years that require special attention and financing. The potential demand could be huge because the majority of older Americans lack college education. Of the U.S. population 55 years and older, it is estimated that only 14 percent of African Americans, 37 percent of Asian Americans, 11 percent of Hispanics, and 26 percent of Whites have a 4-year college degree.

Today’s seniors are in a better financial position compared with previous generations, but are by no means wealthy. The median income for those age 65 or older is \$26,036. But for seniors without a college education, that number decreases dramatically, to only \$15,000 annually. For these seniors, going back to college may have nothing to do with personal enjoyment. It could be a vital step to obtaining extra income during their retirement years.

“Many older adults have remained in low-skill jobs for most of their lives. And with high school diplomas or less, they may never have viewed college as a possibility,” the report notes. But many could be rethinking that as retirement approaches.

Much like their younger low-income counterparts, many seniors find lack of financial resources is a major barrier to college access. Older Americans face several other structural barriers to college such as lack of transportation and inadequate support services, but financing is the most significant barrier, according to the ACE report.

“For those living on fixed incomes, this barrier is often insurmountable,” the report notes.

Seniors face different financial obstacles than younger students. Older students may be putting their children or grandchildren through college, or may have financial responsibilities for their parents. In either case, a lack of funding is consistently cited as one of the top reasons older adults do not pursue higher education.

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Financial Barriers are Obstacles... — continued from Page 4

A Portland Community College Task Force on Aging found that six in 10 older adults say that financing is an impediment to achieving educational goals, pointing out that little funding is available “for people with prior degrees who are switching professions in mid-life, nor are there many available work-study programs for older [more experienced] people.”

The financial aid process can be complicated to anyone, but can be especially daunting to seniors who may not be familiar with electronic processes or may have difficulty navigating the myriad financial aid programs that exist. According to the study, almost all states have fee waiver programs specifically designed for older adults, but understanding their terms and conditions can be confusing. Some fee waiver programs have minimum age requirements, others only cover certain credit or noncredit hour classes. Some provide only partial funding, others provide full funding, excluding books or fees.

In 18 states, financial aid programs for older students are mandated by state law, in 10 states there is a formal state policy for these programs, and in 21 states individual institutions have implemented institutional financial aid programs to help older students.

Even if such programs exist, where would older students find out about them? Financial aid administrators can take the initiative in helping this population by researching financial aid that is specifically geared toward older adults who are looking to brush up their skills, transition into a new career, or boost their post-retirement income. While their academic needs and interests may be different than the traditional student, the financial barriers faced by older students are the same. Doing what aid administrators do best – finding resources to help students go to college – will provide access to those who are returning to college and those who are long overdue for a chance at a college education.

By Justin Draeger, Assistant Director for Communications, NASFAA. Justin may be contacted at DraegerJ@NASFAA.org.

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Administered by
Bank of North Dakota
Overseen by
Industrial Commission of
North Dakota

GOVERNOR
John Hoeven

ATTORNEY GENERAL
Wayne Stenehjem

AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER
Roger Johnson

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Dakota policy unless so
stated.*



2007 Upcoming Events

November 13, 14, 15, & 28
2007 NDASFAA High School Counselor Workshops
(see Page 3)

New Report Looks at Longer-Term Default Rates

Education Sector, an education think tank, recently released a report entitled "[Hidden Details: A Closer Look at Student Loan Default Rates](#)" which looks at default trends included in a report by the National Center for Education Statistics. While many of the findings were predictable, those focusing on dynamics such as race/ethnicity were surprising. Among the report's findings are the following:

The overall national default rate for the NCES sample is 9.7 percent;

The overall national default rate for the NCES sample is 9.7 percent;

- Borrowers with \$15,000 or more in debt were three times more likely to default than borrowers with less than \$5,000 in debt;
- The default rate for borrowers with \$15,000 or more in debt was nearly 20 percent;
- Borrowers with the lowest starting salaries were more than four times more likely to default than those with the highest salaries.
- Student loan defaults varied widely by race/ethnicity. African-American students in the NCES sample defaulted at a rate of nearly 40 percent, compared to 17 percent for those identifying themselves as Hispanic, 7 percent for White, non-Hispanic and 4 percent for Asian or Pacific Islanders.
- On average, defaults occurred four years after graduation.

Adapted from an article published by NCHelp